

Members of the Public Safety Committee:

My name is Mary Smutnick. I reside in rural, Northeastern Connecticut.

I am testifying today in regard to Bill No. 6595, AN ACT PROHIBITING THE DISCHARGE OF FIREARMS NEAR PRIVATE RESIDENCES.

Specifically, I am addressing this section of the bill's text in my testimony:

Any person who (2) intentionally discharges any firearm within five hundred feet of any building that is used for residential purposes and not owned by such person, without the owner's consent, shall be guilty of a class C misdemeanor.

This bill, if passed into law, may restrict me and my family's future use of our property for target practicing and recreational shooting. Situations such as deep, yet relatively narrow parcels such as ours may restrict our enjoyment of our property if a home is ever built on the other side of our land. Understand that safety is always the primary consideration when shooting on our property.

This proposed legislation would not only seek to restrict me and my family's use and enjoyment of the sport of shooting on our land that we own and for which we pay taxes, but will restrict or altogether halt the activity for many other property owners in our state.

Target shooting as well as other types of recreational shooting are great outdoor activities for many families. It teaches and reinforces life skills such as self-confidence, personal discipline, and sportsmanship, as well as safe and responsible use of firearms.

Current laws should deal with those who discharge firearms in a reckless manner with disregard for neighbors' safety. A five hundred foot distance as proposed in this bill, from the shooting area to the neighboring residence disregards the scenario in which houses situated are across the street from one another, yet relatively close to the road, and the resident is shooting in their back yard, away from any residential area.

I ask that you please not pass this bill out of your committee as it

restricts the freedoms granted in our Constitution of liberty; one of the essential elements needed to maintain our Republic.

Thank you.

Mary Smutnick